Montana Outdoors

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JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2015

Thirty-Fourth Annual

PHOTO ISSUE

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

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JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2015

When I travel to other parts of the United States, I'm often struck by how sterile, repetitive, and overdeveloped so much of it is. The same office parks, the same residential areas, the same freeways with off-ramp retail spaces filled with identical box stores. One place resembles the other, and very few look like somewhere I'd want to live.

Of course, people need somewhere to work, live, and shop, not to mention roads to connect it all. Those highly developed landscapes undoubtedly make economic sense, especially in places packed with people. They just aren't for me. Or you, either, in all likelihood.

A person can find at least some open space in urbanized communities that make hiking, cycling, and wildlife watching a priority. Unfortunately, those tiny nature reserves usually are ringed with multi-story houses and glass-walled office towers, making the land no wilder than a bored bobcat in the local zoo. Still, while visiting urban areas I sneak off whenever possible to these undeveloped parcels—usually wetlands and swamps too expensive to drain or fill—just to get a whiff of nature. But too soon I'm forced to leave and reenter the world of traffic, billboards, parking lots, and airport security lines.

Then I return to Montana. Whew.

What I find here is in large part represented by the remarkable images you see in this 34th edition of our photo issue—beauty, diversity, wildness, grandeur, and, above all, the sense of freedom that comes from being surrounded by such vast space and abundant public land and water. A place where you can drive around, look up at a mountain, and say to yourself, "I might hike up there someday," or pass a river and think, "I might fish that stretch next summer." And, in all likelihood, you could.

In this state of seemingly limitless outdoor possibilities, a person could see any of the scenery or wildlife featured in this issue of *Montana Outdoors*, depending on the season, the location, or happenstance. Of course, few of us will ever actually spot a lynx, or a hoary bat, or bighorn rams in combat. As much time as I spend outdoors, I've never seen a mountain lion in the wild, or a wolverine. But someday I might, if I'm lucky enough or willing to hike a bit deeper into the wilderness.

Knowing that we live in a state where all these animals are actually out there, alive in the wild, in numbers often equal to what explorers found here 200 years ago, is just another reason why those of us who leave Montana, even for just a few days, can't wait to get back.

—Tom Dickson, Editor

ERIK PETERSEN
Above: Thunder clouds over Makoshika State Park in eastern Montana

KERRY T. NICKOU
Right: Canada lynx, Many Glacier area, Glacier National Park

DONALD M. JONES
Cover: White-tailed jackrabbit in winter pelage, Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Clockwise from top left:

VIC SCHENDEL
Morning light on bull elk antlers, near Ennis

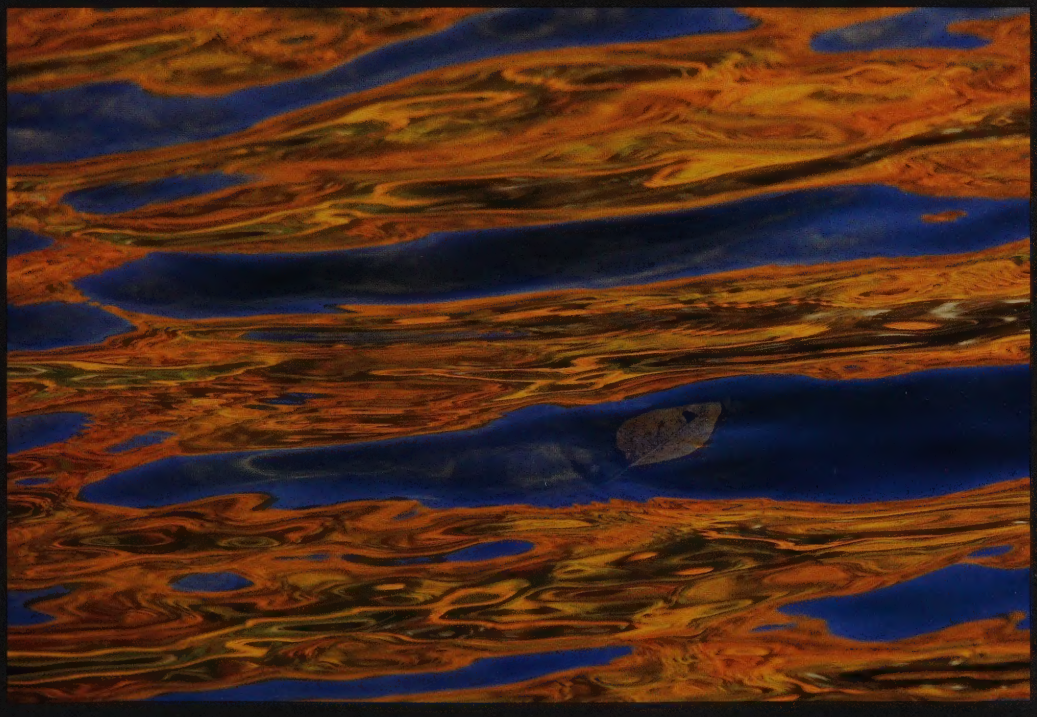
ZACH CLOTHIER
Looking toward the Beartooth Mountains from a meadow at sunrise

ELIZABETH MOORE
Bull and cow elk in the Missouri River Breaks

ROWAN NYMAN
Above: Rising fish and setting sun on Quake Lake

KENTON ROWE
Right top: Watering hole on ranchland near Big Sandy

PATRICK J. CHAPLIN
Right bottom: Reflections of autumn leaves on the Bitterroot River



Clockwise from right:

BRETT SWAIN
Bighorn ram pursuing a ewe during the rut in Flathead County

SUMIO HARADA
Bighorn ram battle, Glacier National Park

CHRIS MCGOWAN
Rutting bighorn ram, near Gardiner

TOM ULRICH
Bighorn rams resting on a slope, near Glacier National Park

GARY KRAMER
Above: Cassin's finch, Flathead National Forest

SHAWN T. STEWART
Below: Goldfinch in sunflowers, near Red Lodge

DONALD M. JONES
Facing page: Squabbling bohemian waxwings in a crabapple tree, near Troy

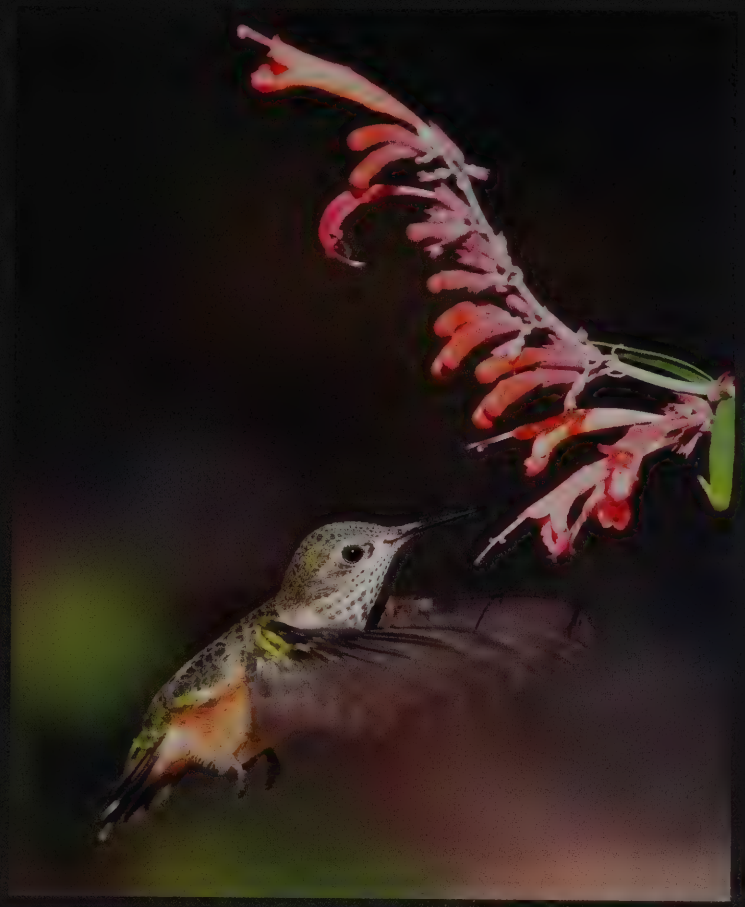
Clockwise from right:

NICK FUCCI
Whitetail doe in a canola field

TODD KLASSY
Cattle crossing in front of Bird Tail Butte, near Cleveland

JUSTIN OLTHOFF
Prairie rattlesnake on the rim of the First Peoples buffalo jump, near Ulm

KENTON ROWE
Sun setting over Dog Creek, near Judith Landing



RON HOFF
Right: Calliope hummingbird, near Missoula

JOHN JURACEK
Below: Aspen leaves, near West Yellowstone

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JUDITH FOY
Above: Flowering grasses on the west shore of Flathead Lake

STEVEN AKRE
Left: Rocky Mountain Parnassian butterfly, near Florence

ZACH CLOTHIER
Facing page: Mountain goat on a rocky perch, Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness

BRETT SWAIN
Above: Mountain goat leaping a stream, Glacier National Park

SUMIO HARADA
Below: Mountain goat nanny and kid, Glacier National Park

Clockwise from top left:

KC GLASTETTER
Flock of snow geese, near Choteau

KEN TAKATA
Autumn leaves, Bitterroot Valley

JASON SAVAGE
Rocks and ice, Canyon Ferry Lake

ERIK PETERSEN
Early morning frost on a window, near Clyde Park

DEBRA A. SCHWARTZAU
Dew on lupine leaves

KEN TAKATA
Morning storm on
the Madison River,
near West Yellowstone

PATRICK CLAYTON
Westslope cutthroat trout in the South Fork of the Flathead River

DICK WALKER
Above: Pine marten at Camas Creek, Glacier National Park

KARL KRIEGER
Right: Red squirrel at Rock Creek

NATHAN COOPER
Above: Hoary bat,
near Highwood

JAIME AND LISA JOHNSON
Left: Long-eared owl,
near Great Falls

Clockwise from top left:

LAURA VERHAEGHE
A hawk hunting in the fog, Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge

DAVID PALMER
Foggy sunrise, Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge

SHAWN T. STEWART
Sandhill crane at East Rosebud Creek, Carbon County

JASON SAVAGE
Backlit bison, National Bison Range

RICK SHEREMETA
Above: Grizzly bear heading over ridgeline near Siyeh Bend, Glacier National Park

JESSE LEE VARNADO
Below: Playful sow grizzly and two cubs frolicking on a snowy slope, Glacier National Park

TIM RUBBERT
Facing page: Young grizzly bear browsing on huckleberries, Glacier National Park

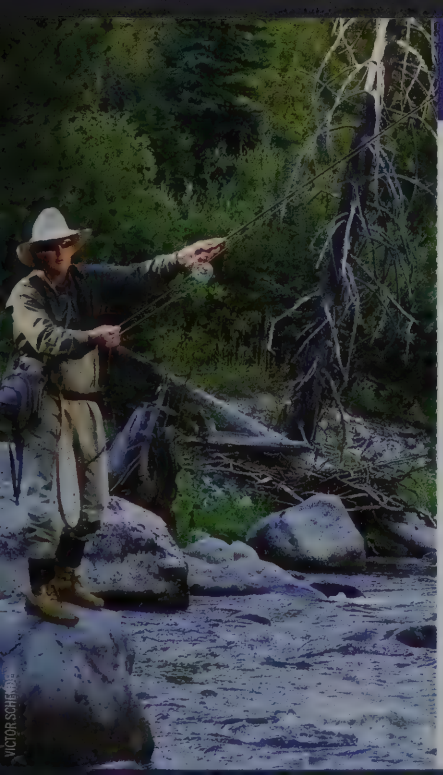
Clockwise from top:

ROWAN NYMAN
Fly-fishing on Hebgen Lake

ANASTACIO NAVARRO
Bowhunter at Bull Creek near Jackson, Big Hole Valley

WILL JORDAN
Anglers in April, Centennial Valley

DENVER BRYAN
Waterfowl hunter setting decoys



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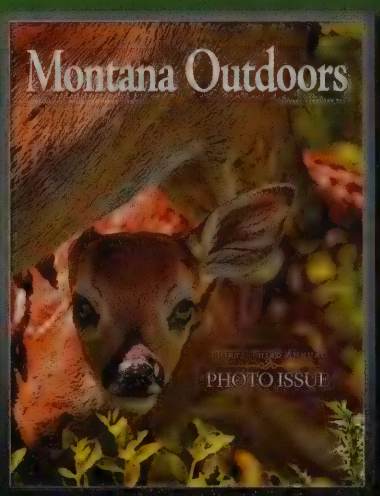

Don't miss the photo issue.

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JR MCCURDIE
Above: Raven on the Hidden Lake Trail, Glacier National Park

COLLEEN KILBANE
Right: Great horned owl and chick, near Red Lodge

ERIC HEIDLE
Left: A wasp's starter home, abandoned soon after construction, along the banks of the Smith River, Little Belt Mountains

JEFF VAN TINE
Below: Early May clouds, Rocky Mountain Front

Clockwise from top left:

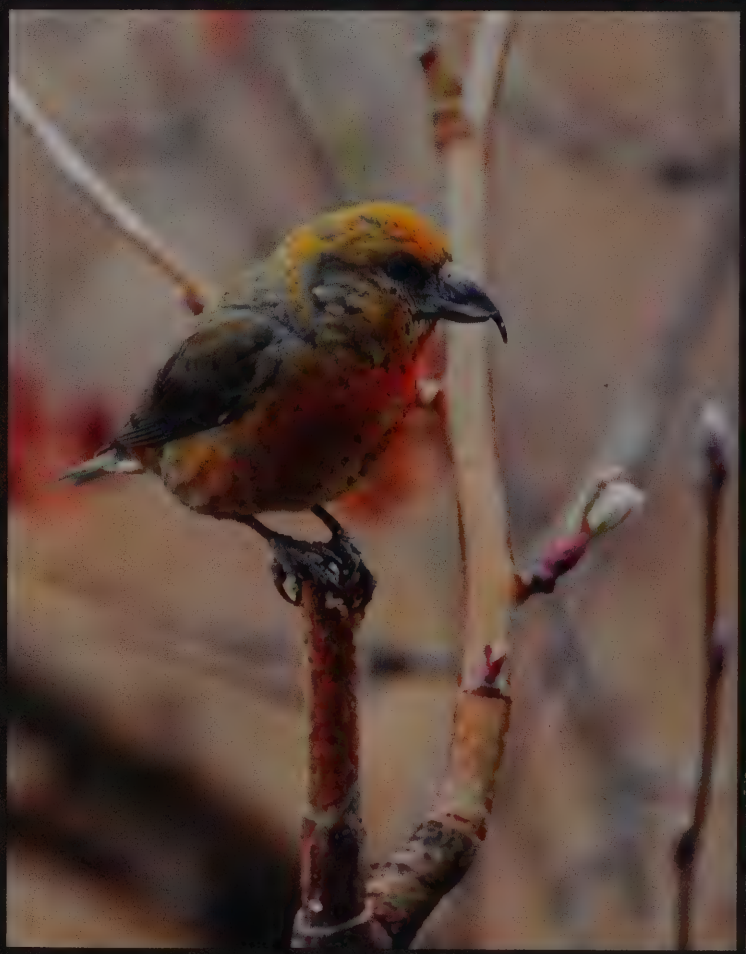
SUMIO HARADA
Columbian ground squirrel in a snow burrow

JOHN SHARKEY
Mountain bluebird, near Montana City

TOM ULRICH
Yellow-pine chipmunk, Flathead County

RON HOFF
Hairy woodpecker excavating a nest in an aspen tree, near Missoula

JOHN RUTH
Above: Sandy beach and aquamarine water, Lake Koocanusa



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KENTON ROWE
Pink-edged sulphur butterflies

ALAN D. HILDEN
Female red crossbill, near Billings Heights

PAT MUNDAY
Slime mold, Butte–Silver Bow County

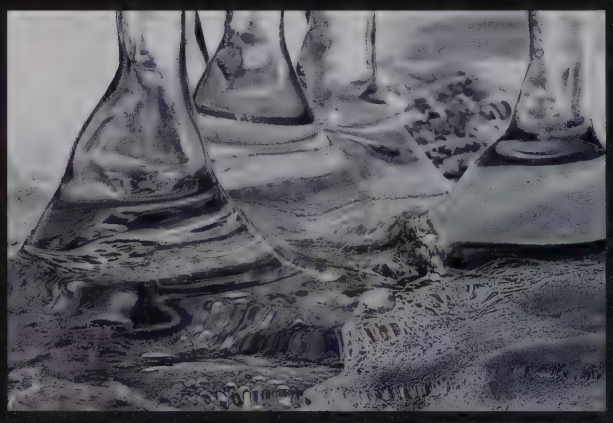
CHUCK HANEY
Above: Badlands at daybreak by Fort Peck Reservoir, near Jordan

CAROLYN BROWN
Left: Blooming prickly pear cactus and approaching thunderstorm, Jefferson County

DONALD M. JONES
Facing page: Black bear cub, Glacier National Park

GLENN PHILLIPS
Above: Moose calf near Lake Sherburne, Glacier National Park

DAVID PALMER
Left: Young bighorn sheep along Rock Creek



Clockwise from top:

NATHAN COOPER
Sunset on an ice pressure ridge, Fort Peck Reservoir

BECCA WOOD
Frosted rosehips at Beaverhead Rock

DICK WALKER
Ice formation, North Fork of the Flathead River

DEE LINNELL BLANK
Icicles under a log at Sprague Creek

BILL McDAVID
Left: Treetops and reflections along McDonald Creek

Clockwise from top left:

ERIK PETERSEN
Stars shining over sandstone formations at Medicine Rocks State Park

NELSON KENTER
Clouds and sunset reflecting off Ninepipe Reservoir

WILL JORDAN
Stonefly shuck along the banks of the Gallatin River

TOM ULRICH
Light shining on a bull moose, Glacier National Park

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GARY KRAMER
Coyote in Lolo National Forest

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